

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 5457

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, TU, UN

SUBJECT: UN VISIT ON GOT POPPY CONTROL PROGRAM

REF: GENEVA 4711

1. SUMMARY: THE JULY 7-17 VISIT TO TURKEY BY HIGH-LEVEL UN NARCOTICS OFFICIALS (REFTEL) SEEMS TO HAVE DEMONSTRATED HIGH-LEVEL UN INTEREST IN THE SUCCESS OF THE GOT POPPY CONTROL PROGRAM WHILE GIVING THE GOT THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW THAT ITS EFFORTS HAVE UN APPROVAL. HOWEVER, MUCH OF THE VISIT WAS TAKEN UP WITH TOURISM. END SUMMARY.

2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DE BEUS OF UN FUND FOR DRUG ABUSE CONTROL (UNFDAC), PRESIDENT REUTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL BOARD (INCB), AND DIRECTOR LING OF UN DIVISION OF NARCOTIC DRUGS (DND) ARRIVED IN ANKARA LATE JULY 7. THEY HELD DISCUSSIONS ON THE GOT POPPY CONTROL PROGRAM AND UN ASSISTANCE WITH THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AGRICULTURE, AND INTERIOR, WITH THE DIRECTOR OF THE SOIL PRODUCTS OFFICE (TMO), AND WITH OTHER OFFICIALS, INCLUDING THE GOVERNORS OF AFYON AND DENIZLI

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PROVINCES IN THE POPPY REGION.

3. DE BEUS ACTED AS GROUP SPOKESMAN WITH THE GOT AND REPORTEDLY REITERATED THE UN CONCERN OVER THE 20,000 TON CAPACITY OF PROPOSED ALKALOID PLANT AND THE POSSIBILITY OF EXPANSION OF CULTIVATION TO ADDITIONAL PROVINCES. ACCORDING TO UNDP SOURCES, GOT IS STILL ADAMANT IN REFUSING TO CONSIDER ANYTHING LESS THAN A 20,000 TON PLANT. MIN AGRICULTURE OZAL IS SAID TO HAVE TOLD THE GROUP THAT ALTHOUGH ECONOMICS AND ANTICIPATED CONTROL PROBLEMS WEIGHED HEAVILY AGAINST ANY EXPANSION BEYOND PRESENT SEVEN PROVINCE REGION, POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS COULD DICTATE SUCH A DECISION IN THE FUTURE. (COMMENT: JULY 1, THE LEGAL DEADLINE FOR THE NEW DECREE THAT WOULD BE REQUIRED TO EXPAND THE POPPY REGION FOR THE UPCOMING 1976-77 GROWING SEASON, HAS PASSED WITHOUT GOT ACTION. IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT SUCH A DECISION WOULD BE TAKEN BELATEDLY, ALTHOUGH THE GOT IN THE PAST HAS OCCASIONALLY USED THE LEGAL FICTION OF BACKDATING DECREES.)

4. THE VISIT RECEIVED FAIRLY PROMINENT COVERAGE ON TURKISH STATE RADIO AND TELEVISION. PRESS COVERAGE OTHERWISE WAS LIGHT. COVERAGE EMPHASIZED UN'S CONGRATULATIONS TO TURKEY FOR SUCCESS OF CONTROL PROGRAM. DE BEUS WAS QUOTED AS SAYING JULY 8 THAT TURKEY WAS "BY FAR THE MOST SUCCESSFUL" AMONG THOSE NATIONAS RECEIVING UN ASSISTANCE IN THE WAR AGAINST NARCOTICS. REMARKS AT THE DELEGATION'S JULY 14 PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWED A SIMILAR VEIN.

5. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO THE GOT-PREPARED SCHEDULE, SEVEN OF THE TEN DAYS OF THE TRIP WERE SPENT IN PRE-ARRANGED SIGHTSEEING OR FREE TIME INSUZH TOURISTIC LOCATIONS AS PAMUKKALE, KUSADASI, IZMIR, AND ISTANBUL. LESS THAN HALF A DAY WAS SPENT IN THE POPPY REGION ACTUALLY INSPECTING POPPY FIELDS, THE TMO'S BUYING CENTERS AND STORAGE FACILITIES, THE SITE OF THE PLANNED ALKALOID PLANT, AND THE UN-FUNDED TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK. COMPARABLE TIME WAS SPENT IN VISITING IZMIR'S PORT THROUGH WHICH POPPY CAPSULES ARE EXPORTED AND IN SEEING THE TMO'S IZMIR STORAGE BARNs, WHICH HAD BEEN BUILT WITH UNFDAC ASSISTANCE.

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6. ANKARA UNDP OFFICIALS, COMMENTING PRIVATELY TO US HAVE CHARACTEREIZED THE TRIP AS VERY MUCH A SOCIAL VISIT RATHER THAN A SUBSTANTIVE MISSION FOR FACT-FINDING OR NEGOTIATIONS. DELEGATION'S INSPECTION OF GOT CONTROL PROGRAM'S ACTUAL OPERATION WAS DECIDELY SUPERFICIAL, THEY SAID. ONE DELEGATION MEMBER DID SEEK OUT USAID OFFICER FAMILIAR WITH THE CONTROL PROGRAM FOR ASSISTANCE IN UNDERSTANDING THE SOMETIMES CONFLICTING AREA AND TONNAGE

FIGURES GIVEN BY VARIOUS GOT OFFICIALS.

7. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE UN VISIT CAN BE CRITICIZED ON THE GROUNDS OF SUPERFICIALITY, IT DID DEMONSTRATE CONTINUED UN INTEREST IN THE SUCCESS OF THE GOT CONTROL PROGRAM AND MAY HAVE GIVEN TIMELY HELP TO COUNTERACT GOT ELEMENTS DESIRING AN EARLY EXPANSION OF POPPY CULTIVATION TO OTHER AREAS. FOR ITS PART, THE GOT HAS HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A PUBLIC RELATIONS SHOW OF THE UN'S APPROVAL OF THE CONTROL PROGRAM.
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